ARROW COMICS

Issue -3

Fantastic Fanzine

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Celebrating Comics' Fantastic Fan Scene!

CAPTAIN AMERICA HISTORY

NEWS & REVIEWS

JOIN THE FUN!

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RalfinStudio Productions

So what is a fanzine anyway, fantastic or otherwise? At its root, it is a *fan* maga*zine*, produced by fans of a particular hobby or interest (in this case, comic books) for other fans to enjoy. It is created out of the desire to participate further in the world of comics, or to go deeper into the community of fandom. Fantastic Fanzine isn't the first magazine of its kind, nor is it even the first incarnation of *itself*! It first appeared in 1983 in humble form, but grew in sophistication along with the experience of its myriad creators, some of whom have gone on to professional careers. Fantastic Fanzine boasts some of the earliest published work of Guy Davis, Vince Locke, Randy Zimmerman, Susan Van camp, Mark Bloodworth, and many others.

And who is going to fill these pages with art and prose? Why, that's also up to you, dear reader, because a fanzine is by fans, for fans, and even about fans! We're looking for artists with cutting edge style, writers with razor sharp wit and insight. That's right, we're talking about YOU again. Fantastic Fanzine needs your strips. We need your reviews of current comics. We need articles about your favorite titles, characters, artists, or writers. How many times do I have to say it!? **WE NEED YOU!**

Okay, enough of the histrionics. *We're* fans of comics. *You're* fans of comics. We want to get together with you to produce a fun to read mag with some cool strips and maybe find some rising stars along the way. If you are in any way interested in the creative side of comics, if you have opinions that matter about comics (you DO, don't you?), if you'd just like to see your name in print, then drop us a line here at Arrow Comics. We'll clue you in to the latest details of this upcoming project and you might even become a part of it.

Fantastic Fanzine will be edited by Ralph Griffith and Stuart Kerr with art direction by Randy Zimmerman. The final format and schedule are yet to be determined and, again, they will be determined to great extent by YOU, the reader and contributor. So please send your inquiries to:

ARROW COMICS/ Ralph Griffith
6505 Troy Taylor, MI. 48180

or contact us through our website at: **www.arrowcomics.com**
join our forum section and post under **Fantastic Fanzine**

YE GOOD OLE EDITOR'S PAGE

Hello Everyone,

Welcome to the next generation of Fantastic Fanzine, from Arrow Comics and RalfinStudio.

Fantastic Fanzine has been published in many formats and volumes during Arrow's history. This time we start with issue -3. Why -3, you say? In honor of DC's Crisis Countdown, I thought we'd have our own lil' countdown for the FF. Plus, I envision the zine as both a labor of love and a learning experience for all those involved. I wanted to leave room for growth and experimentation before I settled on a final format. I also wanted to keep the price down to a minimum. I hope to come out on a monthly to six week schedule. The more material I have to go to print with, the sooner this mag comes out.

The goal is to serve you, the comic fan. Our format at present is digest size so remember all artwork submitted will be reduced accordingly. We're looking for strips, reviews, insights, or whatever else you think we need to see or discuss.

In this issue, we have a great cover by Arrow alum, Mark Bloodworth, who was kind enough to allow us to use a never before printed Capt. America that's just plain awesome! Also inside is a Cap illo by local artist Rob Thomas.

Longtime journalist The Snoop returns for news and views on the industry. We have reviews, and a "Know your local Fandom" section, where we spotlight local shops, conventions and fans.

Where else we're going depends on you? We are looking for idea's and feedback!

Next issue will spotlight Superman so get any pictures you have in ASAP. The cutoff date is Aug. 20th.

Ralph Griffith

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The SNOOP'S Headlines and Views on the latest comic news!!!

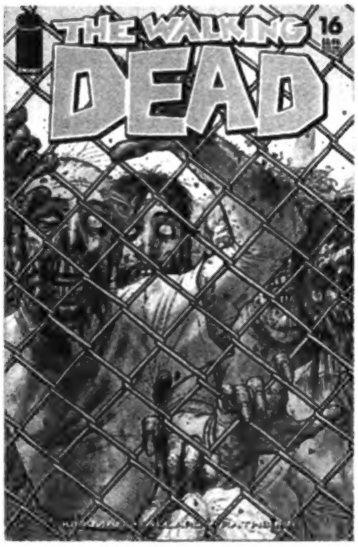
Was anyone surprised? According to *Variety*, the MPAA busted vendors at the prestigious San Diego Comic-Con for selling illegal copies of DVDs of theatrical releases and television shows. The San Diego cops were brought in to haul away a couple of bootleggers. Any of us who've attended a show of any appreciable size has seen this type of activity going on. Check your collections, especially you anime fans. There may be some of this product hidden away in there. We've all seen it. We all know it's wrong. And it's taken this long for it to come into some major light. What does that say?

Blade on a Spike. The internet is buzzing about a 13 episode Blade series on Spike TV. Unsurprisingly, it will not star Wesley Snipes, but I think this might be the next Highlander if they handle it right. David Goyer wrote all three Blade movies and is co-helming this series. Marv Wolfman's mid 70's character has always had a cult following – it's some of the best comic book work of the time and holds up today – and this show may be a left field hit. Of course, opportunities abound to just kill the character, but with Geoff Johns on board as well, we may hold out hope. Good luck, guys!

Aparo Dead at 72. Comic fandom loses another legend with the passing of famed Batman artist Jim Aparo on July 19, 2005. He was 72. He started his comic career with Charleton Comics and illustrated for many different genres of books, most notably westerns and war comics. He went over to DC in the late 60's and worked on Aquaman, Phantom Stranger and many horror titles. I first came across Mr. Aparo during his run on Brave and the Bold. He had some great covers. We're losing the da Vincis and the Michaelangelos of the comics world. Next time you're at a show and one of these legends are in the mix, go shake their hands and let them know how much you appreciate them. Whoever your current favorite artist is right now, he or she was influenced by this old guard…heavily. Don't miss the chance.

V is for Violence..I recently saw the trailer for A History of Violence with everyone's favorite ranger Viggo Mortensen as a family man thrust into celebrity, in a brief moment, when he kills two robbers threatening the lives of his employees and patrons. David Cronenberg (Videodrome) directs. The film is based, of course, on the graphic novel of the same name, written by John Wagner and illustrated by Arrow Comics alum Vince Locke. Vince, by the way, got his start in an earlier incarnation of this very zine! Judging by the few minutes I've seen, and it's a nicely edited trailer as well, I'm giving this an advance thumbs up, definitely worth a peek. Thinking about contributing to Fantastic Fanzine? Vince did. The rest is history.

COMIC REVIEWS



Everyone has been asking me about my opinion on "The Walking Dead" published from Image. Since Arrow produced one of comicdom's first on going zombie-Romero-esque style comics on the market back in 1986.

I had read a few of the later titles that appeared like "Zombie World", "Night of the Living Dead: London", and later editions of "Dead World" published by Caliber Comics. While all of these were interesting, none of them compelled me to want to grab the next issue to see what happens.

I had tried twice to relaunch my own version of a zombie holocaust comic called "The Dead", both times the books had great reviews, however both suffered the loss of their artists within three issues. Not being able to find the right replacements with a style geared towards the genre, caused the cancellation both times with numbers climbing. Frustrating to no end...sigh...

Anyway, people I knew kept asking, "so whadda ya think of the new Walking Dead comic?". So I decided it go out and give it a try. Anyone who knows me, knows I'm a huge zombie fan and has seen about every film made from "The Invisible Invaders" (cool & underrated), all the Dead and Living Dead films even the Italian flicks, seen 'em all.

So it was off to the local comic shop. Ebay proved the early editions were both hard to get and expensive. My local shop owner was out of the first trade, but I picked up the second one and all the remaining issues.

Well, I've just finished everything up to issue 16 and here's my thoughts. This is one of the best books on the market today. I can see what the strong appeal is.

First I'll tackle the art of the series: Both Tony Moore and current artist Charlie Adlard are good, not jaw dropping great, but they are suitable for the book. Sometimes the characters seemed a little stiff (okay for zombies, I suppose...lol). Often backgrounds were left lacking a little. The use of gray tones was nice as was the use of shadow and lighting. I'd read about the penciling change and I feel it hardly missed a beat. Only after reading in the letters page about readers comparing the pros and cons of each did I really noticed. I hope that's a good thing. Overall my grade on the art is a C+ or B-.

Now for the writing/plot : Not much to complain about here. The characters have depth and are well rounded and motivated. Many soap opera methods of pacing are used throughout the book making it a quick and interesting read. Believe me keeping a band together, feeling safe and goal focused is a real challenge in this type of book. And Kirkman hits his mark. If I could lodge a complaint, it's just not enough gore and zombie action. We all love our characters but we love our blood and guts too. My overall grade here is a B+ or A-

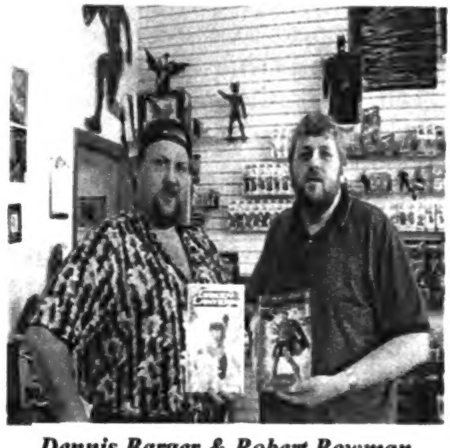
This is a good comic! Glad I bought it, one of the best on the market today, and I'll be buying issue 17. Also big bonuses for a awesome letters page, and for keeping a fairly regular schedule.

Local Fan Spotlight!!!

Wonder World

In this month's local fan spotlight we drop in on Michigan's newest store, WONDER WORLD, located at 22391 Ecorse Rd.,Taylor, MI. Phone (313) 292-8697. The shop is operated by Dennis Barger and Robert Bowman, both longtime fans and dealers, that some of you may have met at the Motor City ComicCons of old.

I had a chance to meet with Dennis at his store on a busy Friday afternoon. The store boasts more square footage than any other in the state. Very roomy with lots to see, many long boxes of back issues and one of the widest selection of toys anywhere. Back issues were reasonable and newer releases on "hot" comics were still at cover. All comics come bagged and boarded for free! Both Bob and Dennis' knowledge in the field is extensive and are always willing to assist you in your quest. The Store also offers a pull service which makes sure you get your book before it goes out on the stands and you can get an additional discount on your purchase based on the volume of books you preorder. The top selling titles currently are New Avengers, Batman, and Wonder Woman along with all recent DC Crisis titles.



Dennis Barger & Robert Bowman

Dennis' favorites are Green Lantern, OMAC Project, and J.L.A. although he says many fans may be missing out on J.S.A. Although sales on this title in his store are climbing. See publishers, storeowners do make a difference. Dennis also noted the fans disdain for all the gimmick covers being done but likes the fact that writers are being allowed to explore new directions and storylines.

This is one store you'll have to check out if you're in the area!

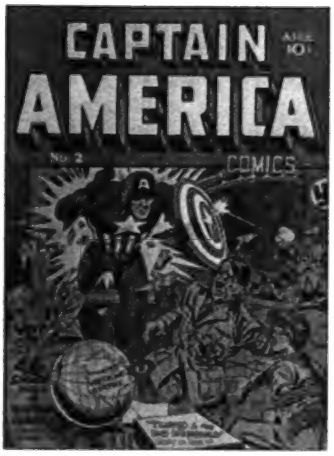
HERO OF HEROES

by Stuart Kerr

When you think about the epitome of super heroes, who comes to mind first? Superman? Well, he sure is super, and he's all man, but he's not actually human, is he? Spiderman? We all love him, but...too much angst. Batman? Now there's a fine example. No real superpowers, yet overcomes foes who have greater strength, flashier powers, and sometimes even niftier gadgets. But wait, he's kind of dark, isn't he? All that repressed anger. And the whole vengeance thing. Isn't there someone who represents all the best things in humanity, someone who sums up in one package the word *hero*? My vote goes to the Sentinel of Liberty, CAPTAIN AMERICA!

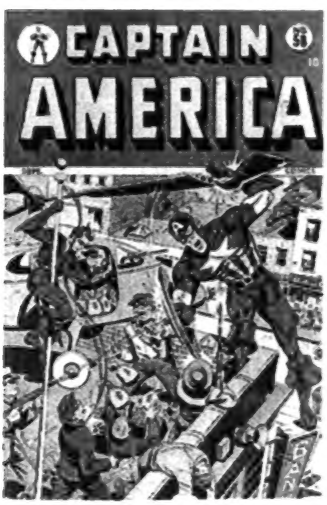
Cap is brave, honest, strong-willed, gentle, self-assured, humble, and indefatigable in his quest for justice. His honor is never in question, and he is rarely in a moral quandary. He has a way of seeing to the heart of the matter and knowing the right path to follow. When the bad guys hurl bombs, bullets or

bacteria at helpless civilians, Captain America unhesitatingly puts himself in harm's way. He is George Washington, Matt Dillon, Audie Murphy and G.I Joe all rolled into one.



Don't think about any particular exploits. Think about the *character*. Captain America is not simple. He is not fearless. He is certainly not invulnerable. He may be from a simpler time (at least according to our nostalgic eyes, far removed from the reality of 1941), but he lives in our complicated, busy world of today. And functions quite nicely, thank you.

Steve Rogers was born during the Depression to Joseph and Sara, who both passed away before he reached adulthood. He had no brothers or sisters. A frail youth, born into poverty, he showed no sign of the hero he was to become until the day he was horrified by the sight of newsreel footage of the Nazis marching across Europe. The classic 98 pound weakling was determined to rush to the aid of oppressed, endangered people and set things right. What could he do but head for the nearest recruitment station and join the grand Army of these United States!?



Sadly, due to his frailty, Steve Rogers was

rejected by the Army. It would simply be impossible to make an effective soldier out of such a poor example of the American male. Distraught, he begged to be allowed to fight. General Chester Phillips just happened to be in the recruitment center that day, and overheard young Steve's earnest plea to be accepted. Phillips took the skinny youth to the side and offered him the chance to take part in a special Army experiment called Operation: Rebirth. He would become the first in a new army of physically enhanced soldiers who would wash over the tyrants, the fascists and the Nazis like a great wave of American justice. Of course, Steve agreed and was whisked away to a top secret laboratory located somewhere in Washington D.C. where he was introduced to Dr. Abraham Erskine (code named Professor Reinstein), the creator of a "super-soldier serum."

Weeks of testing passed before Steve was finally given the serum. It was administered in three phases. He took part of the compound orally, then was administered a second part intravenous injection. Finally, he was bom-

barded with "vita-rays," exotic wave-lengths of radiation designed to accelerate and stabilize the serum's effect of the human body. He emerged from the vita-ray chamber new and improved. The 98 pound weakling was now 6'2" and 240 pounds of man muscle!

Dr. Erskine was murdered moments later by a Nazi spy who had witnessed the experiment and knew that the enigmatic Professor Reinstein had kept vital parts of the super soldier formula locked in his brain so that it would never fall into enemy hands. Unfortunately, this meant there would be no more super soldiers for the U.S. Army. Steve Rogers was the only one.

More weeks passed, as Steve was put through an intense regimen of physical training and taught the art of war. When he received his first assignment, to stop the Nazi agent called the Red Skull, Steve Rogers was given the red, white and blue costume of Captain America. A hero was born.

Captain America fought many battles for the Allied Powers in WW2 before being

plunged into the icy waters of the North Atlantic by Baron Zemo. Twenty years later, he was discovered, frozen but still alive thanks to the super serum, and emerged to become a member of the fledgling Avengers. He stepped across two decades and jumped right back into battling injustice with barely a hitch.

The America that Cap represents has come under fire since the "glory days" of WW2 when we were the heroes of the world. September 11th, 2001 saw the biggest hit on American soil since Pearl Harbor. Being the biggest kid on the block in a post-Cold War world, America takes a lot of heat, deserved or not.

Several recent Cap stories have focused on an America that is not as pure as the country that the movie serials of the 1940's portrayed. Nonetheless, Captain America, the character, remains steadfast in his belief in the Constitution, in right conquering wrong and justice prevailing over the evil forces of the world. He is a genuine hero, and America could learn a lot from its Sentinel of Liberty!

"CAP" by Rob Thomas

All artwork in this article © Marvel Enterprises

COMIC CONTACTS

* Big Ben's Comics	8241 Allen Rd.	Allen Park	(313) 382-0700
* Comics Rox Collectibles	19190 Eureka Rd	Southgate	(734) 324-3160
* Green Brain Comics	13210 Michigan Ave.	Dearborn	(313) 582-9444
* Pack Shack	23565 Van Born Rd.	Taylor	(313) 299-0550
*WonderWorld Comics	22391 Ecorse Rd.	Taylor	(313) 292-8697
A To Z Cards & Comics	32659 Ford. Rd.	Garden City	(734) 425-6780
Back To The Past	27512 Schoolcraft	Livonia	(734) 261-5411
Comics Archives, Inc.	25650 Plymouth	Redford	(313) 937-8860
Comic City	42823 Ford. Rd.	Canton	(734) 981-3561
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Superman © DC Comics

Remember to send in those Superman pics. And join us here next month as the countdown contunues!!!

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